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tical job • this cofferdam built of heavy timbers that would stand the pressure of 90 feet • and made big enough to contain the foot of the pier. Now once they got it down, they had to pump it out. Of course it leaked like the devil. So it all had to be ballasted out? side with sand and gravel piled up around it, underwater. They couldn't go down. This is the early '90s. Probably lowered sandbags. They had to put a lot of ballast around so there wouldn't be a rush in. They finally got this thing pumped out, stopped the leaks around • then went inside and went to it at the bottom with picks and shovels, and hoisted out the overburden. And they had to go down quite a little distance. (Let me understand: men climbed down inside the cofferdam and then began digging through the overburden to get to the bedrock?) Oh, yeah. (At the bottom of the lake?) Yes. They had to get to the bedrock. It could have been 3 or 4 feet, it could have been 30 feet • I don't know. Anyway, once they hit the bedrock they had to quarry out a flat area. They had to put in anchoring bars • big long bolts. And then start the masonry up the sides, build it up, inside the cofferdam. Cofferdam stayed there. (You mean the cofferdam was the mold, and they poured concrete into it?) No, no, no. It was a sort of mold all right. But the work was all stone work. They had to cut the stone and lower it in. They couldn't pour. They didn't have cement like that in those days. Cut stone. And build up the pier from the bedrock up to a distance say of 4 or 5 feet above high tide • that's the way it is there now. The tide is 6 feet. (All cut stone?) Big stones, good size, mortared them together • and up they came. Each one of those piers that you see at the end of the girders. We call them girders; actually, they are cantilever beams. And there is an extra one for the turntable • because one of those spans rotates on an axis. And by the way, if you like old engines, you should go up in that tower some day and have a look at the engine that turns that span, that rotates it • it's the most ancient thing you ever saw in your life. The railway would always keep things. No need buying something new. The block breaks, cast a new one • that sort of thing. The thing they have there now has about 6 cylinders, 14 or 15 inches long • and each cylinder block is separate and between each cylinder block there's a big grease cup. It's got an old magneto type of thing to get it going, hooked up with gears and levers. It rotates a cog at the bottom which engages a big band right around the base of this thing and moves it. Opens the bridge. But that's apart from the main bridge. It's only a detail. Anyhow, they finally finished these piers. Of course the ones near the shore weren't so troublesome. But the one next to the turning span, I'm pretty sure that's close of 90 feet of water • because there's a ship in there. A ship hit one of the piers during the First World War. She was under tow, taking dolomite from Marble Mountain to Sydney • and that ship sank right there. What is the Nova Scotia Museum like? there are 20 ways to find out... At 20 locations around the province from Sydney to Yarmouth, 20 Nova Scotia Museum branches tell us a lot of things about ourselves and the world around us, and how it all works together. They also offer us a perspective into our history, so that we can better understand what makes us the way we are today. The 20 museum branches



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